

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**COMMITTEE REPORT**  
**2024 Legislative Session**

Reference No.: CB-081-2024  
Draft No.: 1  
Committee: Health, Human Services, and Public Safety  
Date: October 17, 2024  
Action: FAV

**REPORT:**

Committee Vote: Favorable 4-0-1 (In favor Council Members: Hawkins, Blegay, Olson, and Watson)

Abstain: Council Member Fisher

**REPORT:**

The Health, Human Services, and Public Safety Committee convened on October 17, 2024, to consider CB-081-2024. The bill sponsor expressed that the legislation aims to create a framework for police officers to collaborate with non-profit organizations focused on social and criminal justice, ensuring that officers receive additional training hours in these areas. The bill sponsor further stated that while some of these practices are already in place, the legislation seeks to codify them and make training performance a qualifying factor for employment.

Sakinda Skinner, Council Liaison, Office of the County Executive, noted that police officers, including Captain Boettinger, had detailed their extensive training program, which already surpasses state requirements. Given this, they don't see a need to codify the existing training requirements, as the Police Department is already excelling in this area.

Council Member Blegay motioned for a favorable recommendation on CB-081-2024, seconded by Council Member Olson.

Chair Fisher abstained, expressing concerns about codifying police training since it can change frequently locally and in Annapolis. She also mentioned that the non-profit partnerships involved in the training hadn't been thoroughly vetted for their expertise, and she couldn't support the bill in its current form.

The Health, Human Services, and Public Safety Committee convened on October 3, 2024, to consider CB-081-2024.

Staff provided an overview of CB-081-2024, stating that it proposes establishing a partnership between the Prince George's County Police Department, local educational institutions, and non-profit organizations focused on police reform and criminal justice. The goal is to work together on recruiting police cadets and developing their training, ensuring the community's concerns and input are considered.

Council Member Oriadha, the sponsor of CB-081-2024, emphasized her long-standing focus on police reform, having served on the Administration's police reform task force. She highlighted the importance of creating partnerships with nonprofit organizations focused on racial and social justice. This legislation aims to integrate this into police training and evaluate police academy applicants' performance on these issues to determine their eligibility.

The Office of Law reviewed CB-081-2024 as it was presented on September 17, 2024, and finds it to be in proper legislative form. The Office of Law sees no legal impediment to its enactment.

Mr. David Williams, Legislative Budget & Policy Analyst, provided written comments on the Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement.

Sakinda Skinner, Council Liaison, Office of the County Executive, stated that we are joined by our subject matter experts from the Police Department who are responsible for overseeing the training to share the efforts the police department is already undertaking in this area.

Acting Captain Brendan Boettinger outlined the current training programs and initiatives within the Police Department. These programs align with the proposed bill, and the intent is to identify any differences between what the department is already doing and what the legislation sponsor is proposing.

Captain Boettinger shared that the police department collaborated with the University of Maryland to initiate implicit bias training, continuing this partnership through 2021. In 2022, they partnered with the African American History Museum of Culture in Washington, D.C., to develop a curriculum for ongoing training. Officers receive four hours of in-service training annually, and recruits in the academy participate in an eight-hour classroom session. The training focuses on civic engagement, policing history, racial equity, and social justice, specifically tailored to the county.

Captain Boettinger shared that the department's annual training program is concluding for the year, and once it ends, planning for the next cycle begins, with the program starting in March. This tight timeline makes it challenging to identify and coordinate with different entities at the local education institutions, national law enforcement organizations, and non-profits willing to partner with the Police Department.

Council Member Blegay spoke in support of CB-081-2024, emphasizing the significance of codifying police training to guarantee its ongoing implementation. She also noted that the timeline considerations may need to be addressed.

Chair Fisher emphasized the importance of understanding the difference between state law requirements for police training and what is currently being implemented. Captain Boettinger acknowledged that while state law sets a baseline, the Police Department exceeds those requirements.

Council Member Olson asked for clarification on the upcoming steps to move this legislation forward.

Ms. Skinner indicated that Council Member Oriadha is aware of an upcoming meeting to discuss whether the Police Department can continue using their current vendor for implicit bias training.

Captain Boettinger questioned the nonprofit organizations that would meet the legislation's criteria. Additionally, clarification was sought on Section 18193, Subsection A, which requires academy members to complete a program on community service and social justice before field training. This contradicts subsection D1, which states that applicants' performance in the program should be considered when selecting them for admission to the Academy.

Council Member Oriadha stated that the training is intended to happen while they're in the academy. That part of that training could be used to determine whether they are allowed to serve as police officers.

Vice Chair Hawkins made a motion, seconded by Chair Fisher, to hold for further collaboration between the sponsor and the Administration. The motion passed 5-0.